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FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
(HONORABLE BARRY TED MOSKOWITZ)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA,

Defendant

CASE No.: 07CR02984-BTM-1

DATE: 03/28/08

TIME: 11:30 AM

JUDGE: MOSKOWITZ

COURTROOM: 4

**POINTS AND AUTHORITIES RE: FELIX
MOJICA-PERALTA'S MOTIONS IN LIMINE:**

**(a) Disallow 609 Evidence Regarding
Other Crimes;**

**(b) Allow Reference to Punishment
Enhancement**

POINTS AND AUTHORITIES RE: MOTIONS IN LIMINE

BACKGROUND

FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA is charged in an indictment with violating 8 USC 1326, Deported Alien Found in the United States. The indictment charges that FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA was removed prior to January 20, 2007.

I.

MOTIONS IN LIMINE

A. MOTION IN LIMINE RE: OTHER CRIMES AND BAD ACTS

1. The conduct sought to be proven in other acts exceeds the limits set for purposes for which evidence of other crimes, wrongs, or acts may be admitted.

The Government has not yet stated what its evidence will consist of. However if the Government seeks to introduce of other crimes with FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA committed, the court must scrutinize severely such evidence sought to be introduced due to its ability to unduly prejudice the FELIX MIJICA-PERALTA.

If the Government introduces evidence of any transactions other than those which are the subject of the indictment in order to show pattern of conduct the defendant must be permitted to show transactions with the public over that period of time in order to refute the pattern of conduct the Government is alleging. This would lengthen the trial substantially. Additionally the defendant is

1 not charged with any crime involving any other crimes. The crime charged is
2 specific to the crime that appears in the indictment.
3

4 The Court must be extremely careful to guard against the danger that a
5 defendant will be convicted because of proof of other offenses rather than because
6 he government has introduced evidence sufficient to prove beyond a reasonable
7 doubt that the defendant is actually guilty of the offense for which he is being
8 tried.
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11 Such evidence must be narrowly circumscribed and limited. The criminal
12 conduct must in some cases be similar to the offense charged; and the conduct
13 must be introduced to prove an element of the charged offense that is a material
14 issue in the case and the defendant has to be connected to it. Otherwise minitrials
15 as to each other criminal transaction will occur. Even if a proffered item of
16 evidence can be pigeon-holed in a category, it must nonetheless be relevant to
17 establish an element of the offense that is a material issue. While proof of other
18 conduct may or may not be relevant with regard to relevant conduct, which
19 would be argued in a subsequent proceeding, the evidence must clearly show that
20 the defendant was aware of the other offenses and actively sought to bring about
21 its ultimate purpose.
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26 *2. Even if other acts are relevant, they should be excluded as the prejudice*
27 *resulting from them outweighs their probative value.*
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1 Rule 403 of the Federal Rules of Evidence provides that relevant evidence
2 “may be excluded if its probative value is substantially outweighed by the danger
3 of unfair prejudice (or) confusion of the issues.” This balancing is mandated under
4 the 9th Circuit’s 404(b) analysis:
5

6 Once the prerequisites have been satisfied, the evidence is admissible for
7 those purposes permitted by 404(b) if the court determines that the
8 probative value of the evidence is not substantially outweighed by the
9 danger of unfair prejudice.
10

11 Bailleaux, 685 F. 2d at 1110.
12

13 In undertaking the balancing analysis, “the trial court” should also consider
14 the need for evidence of prior criminal conduct to prove a particular point. *id* at
15 1112 (citations omitted). Thus, the evidence should not be admitted unless there is
16 an identifiable need for it.
17

18 Taking into account the potential for unfair prejudice and the lack of any
19 need for this evidence the court should exclude any Rule 404(b) evidence. Even if
20 any of the previously discussed acts are somehow marginally relevant to the
21 instant charge, the evidence should nonetheless be excluded as admission of these
22 incidents would tend to unfairly prejudice the jury against FELIX MOJICA-
23 PERALTA. United States v. Shackleford, 738 F.2d 776 (7th Cir. 1984) citing 2 J.
24 Weinstein and M. Burger, *supra*, paragraph 404(16) at 404-93 footnotes omitted,
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1 said a defendant cannot be identified as the perpetrator of the charged acts simply
2 because he has at other times committed the same commonplace variety of
3 criminal acts except by reference to the forbidden inference of propensity. The
4 question for the court is whether the characteristics relied upon are sufficiently
5 idiosyncratic to permit the inference of pattern for the purpose of proof.”
6
7

8 The Government must come forward and meet its burden of proof and
9 show the reliability of this “evidence” before the court can make an appropriate
10 evaluation. Once it does, FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA is satisfied that it will fail in
11 its effort. FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA wishes to be tried on the facts of this case and
12 not on other uncharged “events” that lack credibility, proof, reliability, and
13 inherent relevance. The stakes are far too high to permit anything less. Without
14 such “evidence” the Government may have a far more difficult time in proving its
15 case, and that is why it are seeking to bolster its allegations.
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19 The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has recently re-affirmed that other acts
20 evidence is disfavored because “the defendant must be tried for what he did, not
21 for who he (or she) is. Thus guilt or innocence of the accused must be established
22 by evidence relevant to the particular offense being tried, not by showing that the
23 defendant has engaged in other acts of wrongdoing.” *United States v. Mayans*, 17
24 F. 3d 1174 (9th Cir. 1994).
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26
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1 3. *Based upon the foregoing, FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA respectfully requests*
 2 *this honorable court to enter an order precluding the Government from*
 3 *offering evidence of any other criminal convictions an/or transactions other than*
 4 *those charged in the indictment.*

6
 7 **B. MOTION IN LIMINE RE: SENTENCING ENHANCEMENT**

8 1. *It is unconstitutional for this court to apply 18 U.S.C. §924(e) to*
 9 *FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA as the same as a factual assessment, which increases*
 10 *FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA's sentence and therefore may only be decided by a jury*
 11 *upon evidence established by proof beyond a reasonable doubt.*

12
 13 FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA contends the facts surrounding his prior
 14 conviction do not establish that he has the requisite number of the predicate
 15 conviction to trigger section 924(e)(1). Further, FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA
 16 contends that this factual determination, because it doubles the penalty of the
 17 instant offense, must be submitted to a jury and proved beyond a reasonable
 18 doubt.
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22 FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA acknowledges that this issue appears to have
 23 been resolved against him by the United States Supreme Court in Almendarez-
 24 Torres v. United States, 118 S.Ct. 1219 (1998). Nevertheless, FELIX MOJICA-
 25 PERALTA raises the issue because Almendarez-Torres was decided by a five-to
 26 four majority and recent opinions by a member of that majority and by a majority
 27
 28

1 of the Supreme Court indicate that Almendarez-Torres was incorrectly decided.
2 See, Apprendi v. New Jersey, 120 S.Ct. 2348 (2000).
3

4 The factual determination of whether a prior felony conviction qualifies as
5 either a “serious drug offense” or a “violent felony,” as those terms are defined in
6 18 U.S.C. §§924(e)(2)(A) and (e)(2)(B), respectively, is an element of the offense of
7 possession of ammunition by a convicted felon in violation of 18 U.S.C. §922(g).
8 The indictment, therefore, must allege as an element of the offense the one prior,
9 predicate felony conviction.
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11

12 *2. An indictment must contain the elements of the offense charged and*
13 *fairly inform a defendant of the charge against which he must defend. Hamling v.*
14 *United States*, 418 U.S. 87, 117 (1974).
15

16 Rule 7 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure echoes this condition in
17 its requirement that the indictment be a “plain, concise and definite written
18 statement with the essential facts constituting the offense charged.” Fed. R. Crim.
19 P. 7(c)(1). The Supreme Court has recognized the indictment’s role in warning a
20 defendant of facts that may enhance his punishment upon conviction. See, e.g.,
21 Jones v. United States, 526 U.S. 227 (1999).
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25 On June 26, 2000, the Supreme Court issued its decision in Apprendi,
26 which addressed the constitutionality of an enhanced prison sentence under New
27 Jersey’s “hate crime” sentencing enhancement statute when a jury had not found
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1 the operative “sentencing fact” beyond a reasonable doubt and, instead, the trial
2 court simply had found the operative fact by a preponderance of the evidence at
3 the sentencing hearing. The Supreme Court held that Apprendi’s enhanced
4 sentence was unconstitutional. In the course of the Court’s reasoning in
5 Apprendi, the Court stated that “it is arguable that Almendarez-Torres was
6 incorrectly decided.” Apprendi. In light of the majority’s and Justice Thomas’s
7 opinions in Apprendi, FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA position is legally correct.

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11 *3. Accordingly, this court should heed the Supreme Court’s suggestion and*
12 *limit Almendarez-Torres to its facts and demand that the Government prove the*
13 *enhancement element beyond a reasonable doubt.*
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15 II.

16 CONCLUSION

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18 For the foregoing reasons, the Defendant respectfully asks that the Court
19 grant the Defendant’s motions.
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22 **DATED:** March 21, 08

SIGNED: *s/ Christian De Olivas*

23 CHRISTIAN DE OLIVAS

24 ATTORNEY FOR DEFENDANT
25 FELIX MOJICA-PERALTA
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